



**Valeria Montana Bonavides**

Artista Plástica e Visual

## **Fishing in the inner sea**

Dissertação para obtenção do Grau de Mestre em  
Arte e Ciência do Vidro e da Cerâmica

Orientador: Prof. Helena Lebre Dias, Faculdade de Artes,  
Universidade de Lisboa

Co-orientador: Prof. Robert Wiley, Universidade Nova de  
Lisboa

Júri:

Presidente: Prof. Doutor(a) Márcia Vilarigues  
Arguente(s): Prof. Doutor(a) Inês Coutinho  
Vogal(ais): Prof. Doutor(a) Catarina Villamariz

Julho, 2019



FACULDADE DE  
CIÊNCIAS E TECNOLOGIA  
UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA



## **Abstract**

This work is a practice-led research that inhabits the frontier between the tradition in Portuguese ceramic tiles and contemporary art assembling painting, glass and ceramics under the idea of rhizome. The concept, borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari book *A thousand Plateaus* (1988), is used as a metaphor for the creative process developed under reflexive practice. Anchored in a framework that concerns contemporary authors and artists regarding creativity, studio practice in ceramics and glass, and driven from a praxis based research, this dissertation describes and reflects on: i) the site for the emergent ideas – the graphic diary; ii) the territory for the development of glass and ceramic forms – studio practice; iii) the paths, pitfalls, connections that constitute such rhizomatic proposal under the glass and ceramic creative process to render the work visible. The final displacement of works as an installation results exactly from the rhizome structure underneath the creative process followed in this research. As an outcome, a rhizomatic proposal for creative process in glass and ceramic practice-led research is thus offered for future studio practice-based research.

**Keywords:** rhizome, practice-led research, reflexive practice, creativity, creative process, mix media installation in painting, ceramics and glass.

## Index of contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Theoretical framework	
2.1. Creativity.....	4
2.2. Rhizome .....	9
2.3. Tradition re-interpretation, contour, matter, color and space.....	11
3. Methodology	
3.1. Methodological framework.....	21
3.2. Artistic practice and practice led-research.....	21
3.3. Reflexive Practice .....	22
4. Fishing in the inner world, a rhizomatic proposal	
4.1. Exploration territory.....	23
4.2. Creation process as a rhizome, the remix and the rhythms .....	25
4.3. Glass as a metaphor.....	34
4.4. Fishing in the inner sea.....	36
4.5. Fishing in the inner sea, the exhibition.....	37
5. Conclusions.....	40
6. Attachments.....	41
7. Bibliography.....	53

## Index of Images

Image 1 – Corpus Callosum.....	8
Image 2 – Referent: Adriana Varejão painting.....	12
Image 3 – My painting “Two of cups”.....	13
Image 4 – Referent: Adriana Varejão painting.....	13
Image 5 – Referent: Add Fuel mural.....	14
Image 6 – Sign of cancer in the painted azulejos.....	14
Image 7 – Referent: Lie Xue sculpture.....	15
Image 8 – Referent: Christine Borland sculpture.....	16
Image 9 – Referent: Katharine Morling sculpture.....	16

Image 10 – Cobalt frog in leaf.....	17
Image 11 – Referent: Kiki Smith Installation.....	18
Image 12 – Kiki Smith “Constellation” (1996).....	19
Image 13 – Kiki Smith “Constellation” (1996) detail.....	19
Image 14 – Referent: Klein Blue.....	20
Image 15 – Glass cups.....	24
Image 16 – Sketchbook.....	28
Image 17 – Part of the process: Broken Isn’t Bad.....	29
Image 18 –Painting 1.....	30
Image 19 – Sketchbook.....	30
Image 20 – Painting 2.....	31
Image 21 – Painting 3.....	32
Image 22 – Painting 4.....	33
Image 23 – Tiger in safety glass and painting.....	35
Image 24 – Interaction map of “Fishing in the inner sea”.....	36
Image 25 – The ever changing nature of “Fishing in the inner sea”.....	38
Image 26 – The objects pointing the lines of flight in the installation.....	39

Index of annexes

1. Interaction map of “Fishing in the inner sea”.....	42
2. Sketchbook .....	42
3. Fishing in the inner sea exhibition.....	47

---

## FISHING IN THE INNER WORLD

### *How is it possible to create something new?*

*Artists struggle with this problem all the time. For them it is a battle against cliché. The artist does not begin with a blank page or a blank canvas. The canvas is not white but black, covered with every past style, color, and shape. The artist’s first task is to scrape away all the accumulated layers of cliché so that something new can be created.<sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> ADKINS, B. (2015). Rhizome. In Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus: A Critical Introduction and Guide (pp. 22-33). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

## **1. Introduction**

The possibility of bringing some novelty to my artistic practice and with my artistic practice to the research community is something that drove my desire to write the present dissertation. This text has the aim to first dig on the idea of creativity, an aspect present in art and science, a fundamental skill in the hour of creation and a main concept to have in count when talking about a creative process, thing that I will do further with my practice-led research in art making. How does a person can come up with a new project? More precisely, what are the manifestations of the creative process? The idea is to approach the concept of creativity and ask how it works in order to make sense about how I work as an artist, in a posterior reflexive practice that will also include a metaphor of the rhizome taken from Deleuze and Guattari. Both art and science in the contemporary world of academia have to deal with concepts as creation and research. I will address the idea of researching in art briefly, because other of the objectives of my work is to discover through art practice hidden aspects of the psychological process of making art though the emotional wound: in other words, to “fish” relevant aspects of the inner world in the bridge the wound can create though inner and outer universes, as the title suggests. Can we find symbolic correspondences in painting, glass and ceramics to the emotions, memory and the unconscious process of healing this kind of wounds? Can glass be used as a metaphor instead as only a material? How can it dialogue with the tradition? Where is the point in which glass and ceramic find painting, my natural inclination in creation? How can contour, color, and space live in the tension between the familiar of the tradition in those mediums and the novelty of contemporary art? How contemporary artist have worked this before? I want to discover a way to talk from my subjectivity in the multiplicity the art practice can bring, and reflect about each step of it with the hope that, in the end, I will bring some novelty to the field.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

### **2.1 Creativity**

When we talk about creation we are talking about giving something new to the world. This kind of contribution is given both by art and science, and it involves the skill of creativity. Creativity adds to the culture, in terms of Csikszentmihalyi (2009) in his book “Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention” a study of several

individuals that have made important achievements to fields in the arts and the sciences. Here the author highlight skills like curiosity, focus, awareness of the rules of the field, and love for the work in the creative results, validated by the domains in which it belongs as new or innovative. In terms of the author, if it doesn't add value to the culture it is not creative in the whole sense of the term. In other words, the work needs social confirmation, being added to the symbolic knowledge of a particular society – our culture -. In this writing I will not focus on this kind of creativity with capital C, but in a more humble creativity understanding it as the dictionary can tell us<sup>2</sup>, a skill every human could have and use in order to solve problems in unusual ways. Even though, this more humble creativity have those characteristics of the definition Csikszentmihalyi does, differing just in the magnitude of the results that in this case add to the culture but not necessarily change it radically or shift paradigms. There are authors that consider creativity a skill that can be developed as a way of thinking. In the book “Creative problem solving”, Edward and Monika Lumsdaine (1995) assume that this skill can benefit everyone besides it educational background and it can represent a good shortcoming in our educational system and provide quality products and services in the industry. The authors consider creativity a game with imagination and possibilities that can give us meaningful connections when interacting with ideas, people, the environment and a problem: Something that can be made better with changes. They affirm creative thinking is a subconscious process and aim to combine those elements in order to create something meaningful. Csikszentmihalyi talks about an “incubation time”, a second phase of the creative process ideas may have (being the first the conscious time period of preparation, in which the individual get immersed in the knowledge and rules of the domain in which it will get creative). Here in the incubation, is when unusual connections may occur and is totally subconscious. It is known that there are ideas that just come up in the shower, or the famous moment of the fall of the apple under a tree for Newton: this is the third component, the insight, the time the idea comes up clear after the incubation process. Then, we need to do the evaluation of the idea (third step – in which we ask: Does this work? It is relevant?) in order to start to work on it materialization (fourth step), and move on to the fifth: elaboration. It is worth to highlight that those components in real life can be interspersed, periods of incubation can interrupt periods of elaboration and everything can just change from one hour to another. Actually, there is an author, Graham Wallas (1926) that named four steps a considerable years before Csikszentmihalyi: Preparation, Incubation, Illumination and Verification. The main idea prevail in both

---

<sup>2</sup> According to the dictionary, creativity is “The use of imagination or original ideas to create something; inventiveness.” – Oxford dictionary

authors: there is a need of time before the creative act in order to be immersed in all domain specific information, a time in which the process became subconscious, the moment in which the idea pops up, the need of evaluate if it worth the hard work that will follow and the actual materialization of it.

It is interesting to know how the brain works when it comes to creativity. In the book *"The Runaway Species, How Human Creativity Remakes the World"*, David Eagleman and Anthony Brandt treat the issue both from art and science (the first author is a neuroscientist and the second a musician). Eagleman affirms that the brain is always seeking something between the familiar and the novelty, so creativity is a requirement for the human species evolutionary process. It is a balance between rigor and flexibility. Creativity lives in that tension, we want the world to be predictable but not that much predictable: the author says that is the reason for the endless innovations in hairstyles, bicycles, cars, or other things that are always changing and remaining the same. Even from one technology to another traces from the old one remain: that's the case of the save button, for example. Creative individuals construct over the already-made, giving to it the exact amount of changes to remain in that tension. The author explains another interesting fact about creativity which have to do with our brain: as we have millions of neurons, the electrical paths an impulse have to run between input and output can recall other connections in their way. So, because of the size of our brains, we can make unexpected connections, which leads to creative thought. "It is what allows us to consider possibilities beyond what is right in front of us. And that's a large part of the magic of the human brains: we relentlessly stimulate what-ifs." "What-ifs" lead Einstein to try the elevator to understand time. Darwin, to witness the origin of species. Shakespeare into the mind of Julius Caesar (Eagleman, Brandt, 2017). Each person into the possibilities of the future, the experiences that can lead to something interesting.

So, how the brain works after all to give birth to novelty? Eagleman affirms that is not out of nothing that we create. We insert little changes in what we already know. He puts on the table three main ideas: "'Bending, breaking and blending - the three B's - are a way of capturing the main operations that underline the creative thinking."

When "bending", an original goes out of shape, being modified, twisted or deformed. It is the case of the sculptures of Giacometti, the Francis Bacon paintings or the giant installations of contemporary artist JR. In medicine, we can find it in the creation of artificial hearts and in day-to-day innovations in umbrellas, fashion, shoes and



everyday objects. Even in language, that is always changing in shape as a reflection of human invention. As the author affirms: "bending is a makeover of an existing prototype, opening up a wellspring of possibilities through alterations in size, shape, material, speed, chronology and more. As a result of our perpetual neural manipulations, human culture incorporates an ever-expanding series of variation on themes passed down from generation to generation".

Something whole is taken apart in "breaking" in order to bring something new assembled out of the fragments. It is what the cubism did in art in the XX century, what the technology of cellphones does and what streaming came up with. Also, what the work of the biochemist Frederick Sanger is about which lead him to two Nobel prizes.<sup>3</sup>

In "blending" we come together two or more different things. It is the case of the mythical creatures as mermaids (half fish, half woman), Pegasus (a Horse with wings of swan); the Minotauro (bull and man), the Sphinx (lion, man), or even our contemporary chimeras as Alba, the fluorescent rabbit by Brazilian artist Eduardo Kac in collaboration with French geneticist Louis-Marie Houdebine putting in the rabbit the GFP gene found in the jellyfish, *Aequorea victoria*, that fluoresces green when exposed to blue light. Other art and science examples can be named here as the tree of 40 fruits by Sam Van Aken made using the technique of grafting.

Eagerman have in common with Csikszentmihalyi the affirmation that creativity needs to be inserted in a cultural ambit and its fruits need the social acceptance as something new, innovative or a novelty. This validation in the social system is as important as the creative process itself and must always be taken into account.

Howard (2014) explains in the chapter dedicated to creativity of his book "The Owner's Manual for the Brain: The Ultimate Guide to Peak Mental Performance at All Ages" some interesting facts about the creative brain. He affirms that the corpus callosum, a central part of the brain, is thicker in creative minds (Image 1) and points out three personality factors preset on creativity: the Explorer, The Challenger, and The Flexible. The biology of the first is related to higher acetylcholine, calpain and kinase C levels on the brain. Imaginative people have higher levels of dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with states of mind that allows easy visualizations like daydreams and

---

<sup>3</sup> To figure out the sequence of amino acids that compose the insulin molecule, Sanger proposed to chop it into more manageable pieces and sequence them. This is known as the "jigsaw" method. The same motivation of breaking led him after to a controlled method to study the sequence of DNA.

hallucinations but that also invites constantly to do what-if questions. Somehow dopamine is the “curiosity” chemical. The second, challenging, is related to low serotonin and endorphin levels. The fact many creative personalities report the need to calming down for working suggest less active opioid receptors. It is also associated in both woman and men with testosterone higher than normal relative to estrogen levels. The third, flexibility, is related to lower testosterone and higher dopamine levels.

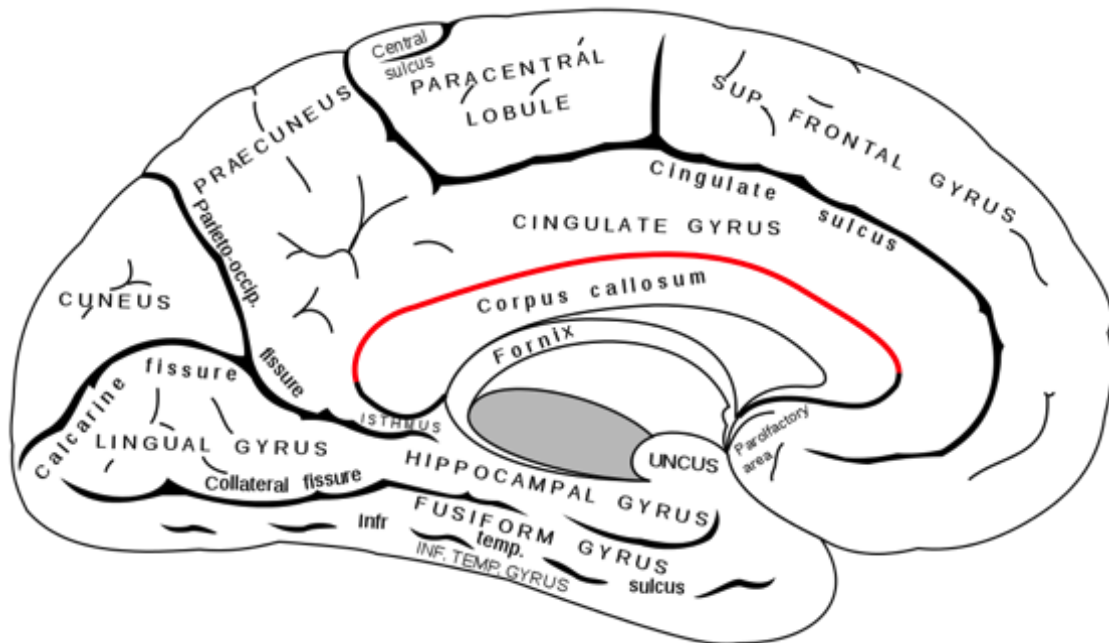


Image 1 – Corpus Callosum

According to Amabile (1983) creativity has a heuristic nature instead of an algorithmic embracing three criteria: novelty, spontaneity and relevance. Something is creative if the domain in which is immersed (the appropriated observers) agree it is. The author affirms creative individuals must have domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and task motivation. The first is related to knowledge of the domain and the necessary technical skills to create something into it. The creativity-relevant skills are divided in three groups:

1. Cognitive style, in which the individual has the ability to break perceptual sets when embracing complexity and change in opposition to functional fixedness. This includes an accurate memory, the capacity of hold options open and suspend judgment when needed as well as being comfortable with wider categories and different points of view.

2. Knowledge of heuristics

3. Work style. Here the individual must have the ability to sustain long periods of concentration, be able to abandon nonproductive approaches, persist during hard times, have a high energy level and be ok with hardworking.

Experience and personality traits are vital to determine our level of performance in these skills. Self-discipline, autonomy, perseverance, delay of gratification, independent judgment, tolerance for ambiguity, willingness to take risk, ability to be a self-starter, absence of conformity to social pressure and self-responsibility are some of the traits a creative being must have. The person must have a positive response to risk and the motivation must be more internal than external (the person must want to do it from inside out). Actually, most of the cases the external motivations are not good for the creative behavior.

The creative process can be seen in a rhizomatic way and have been seen like that for several creators and industries in order to achieve higher levels of creativity. One example can be found in the article of Professor Mats Sundgren (2003) of the Chalmers University of Technology published by Research Gate about creativity in the pharmaceutical industry. Sunddgren affirms: "The rhizome is an integrated ontological and epistemological model that offers numerous opportunities for demystifying creativity and for opening up studies of creative processes in practice. Creativity is the ability to make connections and thus creativity operates as a rhizomatic field." In the next chapter the idea of rhizome will be treated in deep.

To sum up, the creations or novelties as well as the creative process can be traced with roots in the "what-if" our complex brains naturally made. There are five steps in every creative process to have in count (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009): preparation, incubation, insight, evaluation and elaboration. And, to finish up, every creative process needs social acceptance and need to be inserted in the culture in order to be considered something of value, in other words, it needs to be domain relevant. Creativity relies in connections, thus the idea of rhizome is very useful in a creative process.

## 2.2. Rhizome

Desire moves and produces by rhizome. The rhizome acts on it by external, productive outgrowths. That's the main reason I want to address this concept as metaphor for my artistic practice. It is a concept introduced by Deleuze and Guattari in their book "Thousand Plateaus – Capitalism and Schizophrenia" (1987). According to the authors, the rhizome is a lateral, multiple, circular system of ramification rather than a dichotomous one: it is not binary at all, and has not a main axis from which ramifies, opposed to the tree-liked way of thought. In a rhizome, the multiple is made by subtraction of the unique from the multiplicity to be constructed: it is not  $n+1$  as the pivot axis roots or branches but an  $n-1$ . The system constructed in this kind of way, is a rhizome. Here, any point is connected to any other. There is no such thing as subject and object, only magnitudes, determinations, "dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature" giving birth to more possible combinations. Here, we talk about varieties of measurements instead of units of measure. The rhizome doesn't allow overcoding: we must look always in the middle of things: as it fills all dimensions, the authors speak about of a plane of consistency, that is the outside and define the multiplicities. As the outside defines multiplicities, we talk about abstract lines: lines of flight or deterritorialization that can connect multiplicities between them and eventually make them change in nature. The authors points three main aspects of it: 1. There are a finite number of dimensions filled by the multiplicity and they are marked by lines of flight. 2. Unless the multiplicity changes by the line of flight, there is an impossibility of supplementary dimensions. 3. Regardless the number of dimensions, they uncover the necessity of flattering all of the multiplicities.

A rhizome responds to the principle of asignifying rupture: if a rhizome get broken, it will start up again, well from the new lines, well from the old ones. When segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, there is a rupture in the rhizome. Those lines of segmentarity allows territorialization, organization, signification, attribution, etc. A rhizome allows movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization as circulation of intensities. The lines of flight become part of the rhizome: they tie back one to another in a interlink nature, even though heterogeneity. "Follow the rhizome by rupture, lengthen, prolong, and relay the line of flight; make it vary, until you have produced the most abstract and tortous lines of  $n$  dimensions and broken directions. Conjugate deterritorialized flows. Write, form a rhizome, increase your territory by deterritorialization, extend the line of flight to the point where it becomes an abstract machine covering the entire plane of consistency." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983 p. 11)

Structures or generative models are not useful when it comes to a rhizome. It cannot be approached as a trace, but as map in the sense it is always in contact with the real. It doesn't reproduce, it constructs. It's experimental oriented, connectable in all dimensions, open, susceptible to constant modification, detachable, reversible and most important of all: you can enter on it by multiple ways, not just one. In other words, the rhizome operates by variation, expansion, capture, conquest. It is a centered system of interchangeable channels defined by their state at a given moment. It is a mechanic network of finite automata: The graph resultant will be always a map. Even though, the root-tree system and the canal-rhizome system are not opposed. One thing that must be clear is here there is no space to binarism. There is space for traces in the map, but they need to be always put into the map, not the reverse.

A plateau is always in the middle, it is "a continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end. (...) each plateau can be read starting anywhere and be related to any other plateau. To attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987 p. 22) A rhizome is made of plateaus. They are connecting multiplicities, forming and expanding the rhizome. We know we have achieved a plateau when the intensity of our process is so high it coagulates multiplicities.

Other important concept this work addresses when it comes to the creation (in the case of the authors, the book) is the idea of assemblage. They affirm that all we know are assemblages: desire assemblages and collective assemblages of enunciation that, in their multiplicity, relate to the idea of flow: materially, semiotically and socially simultaneously. They reject the division between the field of reality (the world) and the field of representation (the creation, the book). The ideas of object and subject are not important anymore.

Questions as Where did you start? Where are you going? What are you heading for? Are not important anymore.

### **2.3. Tradition re-interpretation, contour, matter, color and space.**

This work can name as references, artists as Adriana Varejão and Add Fuel when talking about tradition re-interpretation of the ceramic tiles to the contemporary world.

Artists as Kiki Smith when talking about personal art and the possibility of reveal inner aspects of the self through art practice and glass. Lei Xue, Christine Borland and Katharine Morling when talking about the drawing possibilities onto ceramics, or even the idea of ceramics as a drawing surface. And of course, Yves Klein with his blue obsession is one of the referents when it comes to color.

In her body of work, Adriana Varejão not only paint oil canvas with tiles, but also bring into the discussion matters as colonialism in a very visceral approach (Image 2). Even though, her influence in this creative process is more formal than conceptual: even knowing that the conceptual background of Varejão is in the field of anthropology and can be very interesting in that line of thought it is the formal aspect of her work that can be considered a matter of interest here. There are a series of saunas and baths she has made from 2009 to now that deeply interest me in the management of pictoric surfaces with a subtle change of the same color (Image 3). As in Adriana's paintings, I get the idea of the azulejo and make another approach to it, not as visceral as her –she uses them as a surface in which the colonized body emerges- but as framework or a vessel that embodies the subconscious mind with its symbols and shapes. Other aspect to point out is the use of shape and color Varejão does in her series of saunas (image 4).



Image 2 - Varejão Academic - Muses, 1997. Oil on canvas 140 x 160 cm.

The images of bodies “pop up” from the tiles surface



Image 3 – Valeria Montaña “Two of cups”. Oil on canvas 100 x 120 cm.  
The images of the subconscious “pop up” from the tiles surface.

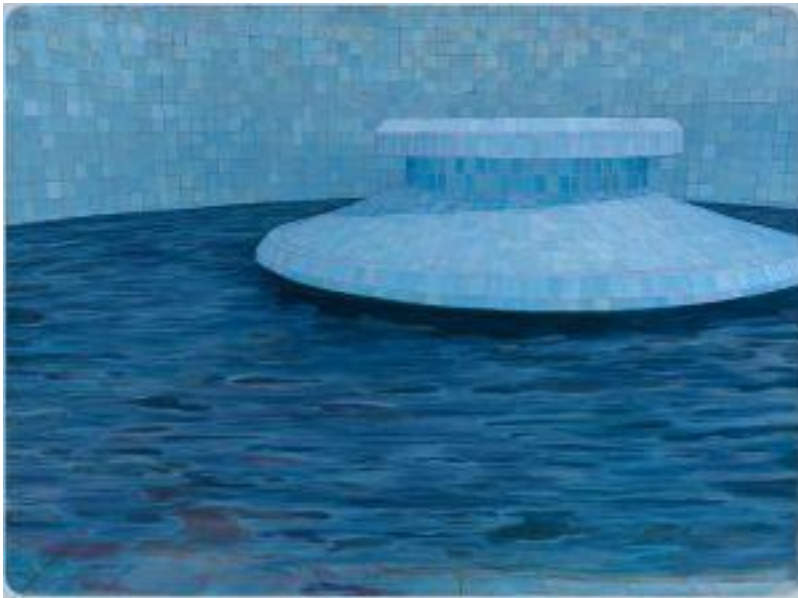


Image 4 – Adriana Varejão “The fountain”, 2009. Oil on canvas 170 x 230 cm.

Add Fuel! (Image 5) is a Portuguese visual artist recognized worldwide for his murals and graphic work with a personal appropriation of the azulejo. In his work, the patterns are made by his personal imaginary of forms and combinations of monsters, bones, guts and eyes. His personal grammar is composed also for rips that are used to divide layers and work profundity. The contour is very clear. The appropriation of the ceramic tiles and its transposition to another medium is successful and rich. When I use azulejos

in my paintings, I use also a personal pattern. In the case of AddFuel, it is monsters, eyes, and bones. In mine, astrological correspondences with the water signs of scorpio and cancer (Image 6).



Image 5 - Add Fuel. Paris, France, 2019. Curated by Galerie Itinerrance



Image 6 – Sign of cancer in the oil painted azulejos.



Lei Xue, Christine Borland and Katharine Morling have also an interesting approach to the painting on ceramics. In the case of Lei Xue, he reproduce the patterns of the Ming Dynasty of China in porcelain, but in pop-culture objets like used cans. (Image 6)



Image 7 - Lie Xue – Drinking Tea

Christine Borland also takes objects charged of significance –skulls, like in “English Family China” (Image 8) from an oversea family- and paints them with the traditional XVII Century Liverpool style, reminding the trade, slavery and other connotations for the viewer.



Image 8 – Christine Borland “English Family China”

In both cases, the artists take a charged symbol and put on it the traditional drawings of the ceramics using cobalt blue. In the case of Katharine Morling, the ceramics become the drawing. She made use of the contour as tool to create three-dimensional drawings of objects in porcelain. (Image 9)



Image 9 – Katharine Morling - “Boom”. 43 x 40cm. Porcelain and black stain 2018

In my case, I make “spacial drawings” as Katharine Morling, using the surface of the cobalt blue as chosen color like Christine Borland and Lie Xue. (Image 10).



Image 10 – One of my frogs in a leaf, using cobalt blue as chosen color.

Kiki Smith makes art from her life experience. She is a strong reference in this work, not only because her personal approach to art making, but also for the archetypical approach she also does. The inner world and the outer world become one assemblage in her art practice. She is able to channel what happen to her –the deaths in her family as an example- to works of art (Image 11) in a healing process that goes from the individual to the universal in a rhizome. “I always see my work as healing in some way—to me, at least.” (Smith, in press). This kind of rhizomatic approach is very similar to the one I want to address with my work, in which the field of reality and the field of representation merge in a flow to give birth to a proposal.



Image 11 – Kiki Smith installation

Kiki Smith is also a strong reference when it comes to glass. She has worked using it as medium to address archetypical forces. One example is the collaboration she did with Pino Signoretto in “Constellation” (1996), with hot-sculpted, cast lead glass animals on an installation of handmade Nepal paper and cast bronze (Image 12 and 13). When the personal meets the universal, something interesting happens. The use of glass when addressing the universal is powerful: as glass can be transparent, it looks like water frozen in the space-time. Water is the symbol of the emotions, the universal memory and the feminine. For those aspects, it is Kiki Smith the most important reference in my practice.



Image 12 – Kiki Smith “Constellation” (1996) – Glass, bronze and paper



Image 13 – Kiki Smith “Constellation” (1996) Detail – Glass, bronze and paper

To finish, I want to name as a reference Yves Klein (1928-1962) with his obsession with the blue color, an adventure into monochrome. His exploration into blue was wide, leading him to patent a kind of blue, Klein International Blue - CMYK (c, m, y, k): (98,

84, 0, 0), a blue bluer than blue second him (image 14) used in in several ways by the artist. As my work have a reduced blue-pallet Yves Klein become a very strong referent. I share the obsession with the blue, in my case the glass and ceramics cobalt blue.



Image 14– Klein Blue

All those artists work with appropriations, conceptual and symbolic values of the materials they use but mainly they are led by a inner desire of making and a loyalty to their own process. Even though we are always influenced by the work of others, we need to realize that we are getting from there only “pieces” for our own personal puzzle that becomes the artwork when mixed with other kind of influences. The blender process Csikszentmihalyi talk about its fed by what we see, what we admire, what we like, what we chose to see deeply.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Methodological framework**

The knowledge produced in the studio is as socially and culturally relevant as the knowledge produced in the laboratory for the sciences; research taken there is a robust form of intellectual and imaginative inquiry. As Sullivan (2005) says: “The main research interest is to investigate how knowledge is created in the process of making art. Research in the visual arts therefore asks questions about the processes and products of artistic knowing. To do this the artist is both the researcher and the object of study.” This work is a research into the art making practice. In order to know the main concepts of the methodological framework the next pages will delineate the ideas of practice led research and reflexive practice that I have followed as a methodological approach to my working practice.

#### **3.2 Practice led-research**

M. Mäkelä, N. Nimkulrat and F.X. Nsenga in their paper “On Reflecting and Making in Artistic Research” (Journal of Research Practice 7, 2011) work on pertinent questions when it comes to research in art. They ask if artistic practice can be acceptable within academic settings and how, and if so, how can the academic notion of research be extended on it. They explore how can research and art practice itself merge in the context of academia being aware that the spectrum of what which be under the term artistic research is wide and heterogeneous. I will focus on practice-led research in the terms of the authors, a research that is more concerned with the nature of practice, focusing the results on its operational significance. I do considerate this dissertation a theoretical complement for my artistic practice, and I believe the art research is something of value to the academia in terms of knowledge. It brings new procedures and outcomes useful for other researchers in the future. The authors affirm: “the term practice-led research has been adopted to highlight the active role of professional practice in the research process. Academic research that follows this approach is conducted in dialogue with the researcher’s creative production, the emphasis of which is equally placed on theory and practice as well as the reflection and documentation of practice” (Mäkelä & Nimkulrat, 2011; Nimkulrat, 2009, p. 37). My work is experimental since the beginning, observable and reportable in terms that I will explain later with the metaphor of the rhizome. Even being in the early stages difficult to explain or report, at the end of the creative process everything makes sense, and the artwork embodies

some answers. Being prepared to inhabit the frontier between the known and the unknown is fundamental. In both art and science “a researcher may not be guided by predetermined procedures and preconceived notions alone” (Mäkelä, Nimkulrat, Nsenga 2011). Although, the scientific discourse reports seem to be often constructed as if the research performance is linear, conducted without error or misinterpretations. Research in art is a self-reflective and self-critical process when doing pertinent contributions to the field of contemporary art that allows communicate where it come from, how it was developed and where it want to go in terms of Hannula, Souranta and Vadén (2005) cited by the authors. Another way to understand it is by classifying it as in the field artistic discovery. Schön proposes the term “reflexive practitioner” to the researcher artist, pointing out the idea of reflexive practice in which understanding the knowledge tied to practice is fundamental.

### **3.3 Reflexive Practice**

A reflexive practice can be understood as a research activity that uses a variety of methods in order to see phenomena in new ways. According to Sullivan (2005, p.100) there are several types of reflexive practices. The first, describes an inquiry process directed by the interest of the practitioner and his creative insight always informed by research expertise and discipline knowledge with a transparent understanding of the field. Here, one must be able to see through data, text and context as well as be open to imaginative conceptions and alternative options. The second responds to empirical understandings. The visual arts research must reflect on the information gathered, review conceptual strategies and having in consideration other approaches if needed. In that way, this reflexive practice can be catalogued as meta-analytic and reveal a multiplicity of new views (this is the one I will address later). In the third, the plausibility of the interpretation of the findings of the researching is determined by an open dialogue with the information. It is a dialectic discussion between the researched and the researcher. This approach can identify problems and open up areas whereby participants become responsive to potential change: it is an inquiry issue-driven. The emancipatory nature of this kind of reflexive practice draws on the notion of “reflexive interpretation”. The author quotes Mats Alvesson and Kaj Skoldberg (2000): “Reflexivity arises when the different elements or levels are played off against each other. It is in these relations and in the interfaces that reflexivity occurs. This approach is based upon an assumption – and implies – that no element is totalized; that is, they are all taken with a degree of seriousness, but there is no suggestion that any one of them is the bearer of the Right or Most Important Insight (p.249)”.



## **4. Fishing in the inner sea, a rhizomatic proposal**

### **4.1 Exploration territory**

I am doing a series of oil paintings with the idea of the azulejo – their characteristic blue and white colors, glass cups, and ceramic panels that I hope to bring together in an assemblage that evokes a mystic aura in the space correspondent to the magic the process have to myself, and the way I have been facing emotional breakdowns. I want to pass from the idea of installation to the idea of space assemblage. The imaginary is taken from the combination between the suit of cups of the tarot –my game- and my personal experiences here in Portugal with my mental health, somehow is a “blending” process in words of Eagleman, “remix” or “collage of experiences and images” in my own words. I blend lots of elements I took from my own experiences, images I consider interesting in which I see a direct connection with my desire. As I believe art can be a way to heal faster emotional wounds and each work of art is self-referential, I make use of it in a deliberated way.

I will address in this text the idea of myself as a reflexive practitioner for what I am doing with this work. My creative process has been jumping from idea to idea, aborting several times in order to start again from the scratch. Each one of them has been useful to achieve the one I am working to present with this dissertation. Everything that we do and everything that passes by our senses is processed and connected with our creative aim, as I already developed in the previous pages: Every creation is done upon the already-made. Our past, our experiences, the images we like, our natural inclination to certain mediums, the place that surrounds us, our desires, etc... All this is connected by the subconscious mind and the idea of the project just pop out to the conscious mind when the time comes, even when it is during the developing of other ideas. Actually, before this project I was working in other ideas for this dissertation, which with the development were left behind as a natural part of the process as a wide image. I work as a tarot reader and in my free time I study not only the cards, but also the poetics of magic. I have a formation as a painter, I am studying glass and ceramics and I am in Portugal, surrounded by the ceramic tiles blue and white, the azulejos. Blue have been a color I have been inclined to use even before coming to Portugal because is the tarot doctrine the color of the subconscious mind, but I must admit that here this

inclination due the surroundings become more and more strong. All this information comes together in my work. The connection is pretty simple: as I am studying glass, the principal medium for cups, I was moved to explore in my practice the suit of cups of the tarot in a line of flight, making a interpretation of it in the medium of expression I am most inclined to – painting – and evoking the place in which I am - Portugal – with the traditional azulejos it has. The work has a specific space-time in which is immersed. As I understand the process as a whole thing, during the time I was doing this dissertation, I use my glassblowing slots to do actual cups with the blue and white I was immersed in the other media. The interpretation I do of the suite of cups makes use of the symbolism of the hermetic tradition it have mixed with symbolic iconography linked to magic like dragons, swans, wolfs, roses and lions. Each painting have a composition in spiral, being the spiral not only taken from the nature and the golden ratio as one could think at first sight, but actually taken from the idea of game board. My creative process have been always linked with the idea of game: in a game, we project ourselves in a parallel universe in which everything is possible under some rules. Each creative process has it own rules: in this case, the time of production, the written part, the academic pursuit, my personal idea of art as a healing method though expression and the blue and white as the only colors to be used were my personal rules. The experimentation for getting new elements for the game and the idea of rhythm to find equilibrium though them played an important role.

The cups I have being doing address the idea of the sacred feminine, the emotions and water, the element behind the suit of cups (Image 15). The cups welcome and mold the empty space yet to become something filled. Some of them resemble dynamic frizzed water drops. They are necessary to give way to the next migration of free associations. A similar glazed blue is found on tiles and so I search another territory of materiality that matches the blue water cups.



Image 15 – Cups

Such metaphor of the rhizome makes me think in elements as plateaus and the exhibition space like a map, one of the possible graphic representations of my rhizome. The idea of this work is to construct an assemblage into the space, which can be nomad and inhabit different spaces in different combinations. The following chapter gets close to such rhizomatic interaction scheme of my creation process.

#### **4.2. Creation process as a rhizome, the remix and the rhythms**

My creative process can be understood as a rhizome in the Deleuze and Guattari (1987) terms. In a rhizome, a centered organization of multiplicities into a system, everything is interconnected forming a tissue. The multiplicities can be seen as the body of work of the explorations made during a period of time moved by the desire. The system is the project, and the project is the game. Opposed to a tree like system, a rhizome does not have the hierarchy of the trunk to the brunches or even the linearity of them. A rhizome has a communication through "elements" that are more likely a bulb or a tuber than a root or more than a grass than branches. Always in the middle. It is based in multiplicity, as my own practice. According to the authors, "A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles." (Deleuze, Guattari 1987) The idea of heterarchy is highly present in my processes: every element I create or I bring into the project exploration phase, is no less or more important than the others. This applies to the conceptual elements as well that can be taken from other disciplines as anthropology with the myths, psychoanalysis, spirituality and even physics. I bring the rhizome idea to my practice in which every element can be put in the map in his connections and can be mutable in it position. Somehow what I am doing in this text, with the reflexive practice, is mapping what is going on with this open creative process, this assemblage that will give birth to an exhibition that I want to be nomadic and mutant. Everything is connected with everything. It is upon me to find the useful connections in each moment, connections that make sense in a specific space-time when needed in order to bring something new into light. In other words, every element created has the possibility of being used with the others in order to create the work of art, and the work of art depends of the space-time in which is inserted. The exhibition as an assemblage is an idea of special, mutant, nomadic work of art. The idea is to see the creation process decentering the parts of it onto other dimensions and other registers, seeing it like a language that is not closed upon it. A multiplicity does not have subject nor object but determinations, dimensions and magnitudes that

cannot change without changing in nature. The possibilities will increase in number as the multiplicity grows and the process advances. The multiplicities grow in direct proportion with the experimentation and the process itself. In my rhizomatic system, there are no points: only lines that cannot be overcoded. The principle of signified rupture in which the authors affirm the rhizome is against the oversignifying breaks rebounding every time it happen can be see in the creative process too, in which dichotomies or dualism are just non-sense. It is all about multiplicities and every break will signify a reconstruction of the system as a tissue. This is why sometime ideas give birth to other ideas, ideas give place to objects, and those grow in their own terms. Every time that one multiplicity (or art project, idea or even element) comes up, it is an entire new universe to be explored. The glass making, the paintings, the azulejos, the ceramic sculptures, the tarot readings, my emotional wounds, the books I read and the concepts I bring into my practice, everything is interconnected and cannot be separated or understood merely as points. It is the flow what matters.

If evolutionary schemas follow the rhizome shape (Deleuze, Guattari 1987) it is natural to be inclined to think the creative process follow it too, operating in a heterogenous way, tracing lines of flight from one element to another. In order to do what I've done in terms of artifacts, I made a line of flight in the initial phase of the creative process from one idea to another, leaving behind the initial ones till find others with more intensity, self-vibrating plateaus.

As I have pointed before, there are five phases of any creative process: the preparation, the preparation, the incubation, the insight, the evaluation and the elaboration (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). In my case, during the elaboration of the first ideas –the making part- the final idea was incubating, popping out and changing everything. The lines of flight one can do though elements are natural in a rhizome. The creative process is in dialogue with the world, if there is no case in separate subject and object, is from the idea of being feed by the whole experience of life that the art making seduce forming a rhizome with life itself. There are not such as “results” as it is pointless to set starting and ending points in a rhizomatic way of doing things. The multiplicity of what we call the exhibition is just a plateau connected to other multiplicities as this reflexive practice, the process of making, the life experiences and references this work could have.

Other important concept is that a rhizome is no tied to any structural or generative model. Although we can think, there is not a central axis from which the creative

thinking derivate it results. The “source” cannot be traced because it came from a series of relationships not linear, not obvious and totally complex. In the creative process of art making the artist needs to be open in thinking rhizomatic and open to make connections though elements in a non-linear way. It can go forward and backwards. It can be rewind to the incubation process and jump forward. It is nonlinear and so it does not configure a chronology or chain of events, as the tree scheme that Deleuze and Guatarri oppose to the rhizomatic map. Such constitution can be verbalized but not immediately. It must be verbalized through reflexive practice, after a tissue of events, the felt smooth space as Deleuze and Guatarri refer, is assembled.

The researcher in a wide picture follow the rhizome lead by its own interest in knowledge. The research evolves and leads to diverse ways of experimentation, even to changing questions for ones more pertinent and/or changing sources in order to find something new or innovative. The rhizome works as a map, not a tracing. It is a construction made of plateaus. Deleuze refers, “What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious”.

My artwork can be understood in those terms: I create plateaus with plastic languages and materials, the painting is one (and inside the painting there are more with the iconography), the ceramic tiles and sculpture other, the glasses another one. They come together as a map when assembled in the space as an exhibition. Even in their formal elements. The tracing is not the map, but it can be done put, located, on the map: the way the creative process can be seen is a map, and we can trace parts of it behavior there but this tracing cannot show us a wide and accurate picture of what the creative process really is. There is not dualism in the rhizome. Further on I will illustrate this concept with the formal elements I use in the series of paintings. By now, I think is important to delineate the basic concepts that surround the idea of rhizome in connection with my practice. In my process, there are discontinuities between cells, leaps that show us it rhizomatic nature. “Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple.” (Deleuze, Guattari 1987). The deal here is to understand the forest that has trees, which communicate between them underground, not the tree alone and separated as a model. As a rhizome has no beginning or end, it can be the perfect concept to understand my

creative process. It is always in the middle, between things, between what is covered and uncovered, between the author and the matter.

In the case of those artworks I present here, everything that comes to the process came in an organic way. I can't trace nor a beginning or ending. It have been rhizomatic and totally connected with other processes and with who I am. But I will start to talk about it from my sketchbook (Image 16). Here in Portugal I have faced my own fragility: I have been in the psychiatric hospital four times in less than two years due to bipolar disorder. Somehow, my condition have made me feel broken inside, and the way I have found to overcome it is to think that broken isn't bad, broken is just broken and we can actually make something about it when we accept it. (Image 17) Actually, my master was not only in glass and ceramics. My master was in being myself and accepting my condition. Somehow, it was an energetic, psychological mastery what I have achieved these two years in Portugal. The way I find to remain strong was art-making and drawing: my sketchbook was my companion in this difficult adventure. I drew when I was fine and when I was down. I totally empty myself in those pages.



Image 16 – The Sketchbook cover, an intervention on a Paula Rego's painting found in press.



Image 17 – “Broken Isn’t bad” – This ceramic sculpture broke in the kiln just in the brain. As I have felt broken with my condition, I didn’t throw it away and pointed the statement there.

Showing the sketchbook to my father, he replied: “Your sketchbook is wonderful. I feel you there. Why don’t you make that bigger?” Then, I realized that the next step was to actually come back to painting (Image 18) and use what I learnt in my sketchbook in a bigger canvas. Looking back, I see the sketchbook as the experimentation phase: I didn’t think too much on what to put on it, so I construct organically a grammar to be used later. It is the case of the spiral in the composition, which I put in my sketchbook as the game board of my desire (Image 19) and I totally transposed it to the big canvas. As well, the blue and white of the ceramic influence is organically there. The tarot imaginary is present, as I am very interested in it. When I pass from the sketchbook to the painting-installation I am following the rhizomatic nature of the creative process in which a cut gives place to an entire new rhizome.



Image 18 – The first of the series of blue paintings a transposition from the sketchbook to the canvas.



Image 19 – The first board game I did in my sketchbook



The suit of cups in the tarot is composed by 14 cards, passing by 3 astrological signs – Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces- under the aristothelical element of water. This suit is about emotions. Emotion, come from Latin emovere, from e- (variant of ex- ) ‘out’ + movere ‘move’. It is about things that move us behind the curtain of the subconscious mind. For Carl Gustav Jung, water is a symbol for the subconscious and the universal memory. In the series of paintings I work with the idea of emotions in that way, using symbols related to water (Image 20), the feminine and my own personal experience (Image 21).



Image 20 – The water element is evident in the second painting of the series, coming out from the mouth of the lion.



Image 21 – My personal experience with medication and my subconscious mind (the wolves).

I use my knowledge as a tarot reader to address my desire through symbols in a process moved under personal rules. It is very useful to adopt the idea of game as a tool in the hour of creating new artwork. In a game, you need to have a territory of action, rules and randomness (normally given by a dice or something else, in the case of my creative process by the behavior of the materials and gesture). In this specific series of paintings that will conform a plateau in the assemblage, the spiral with divisions were useful as a “board” of my own game – the territory to place my personal imaginary- being each division a possibility to be painted. It was my way to place epistemological traces in my rhizome map through painting. The symbols I use are connecting the paintings between them through repetition. This is the case of the rose, that I use as symbol of the desire taken from the B.O.T.A tarot tradition (Foster Case, P., 1933) and the serpent, symbol of hidden knowledge that we can find in several myths like the Adam and Eva in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the kundalini in Indian tradition and the caduceus staff of Hermes, in Greece. As well as the heart, which is directly connected with the idea of the emotional world, is present in more than one painting. The animals are related with inner aspects: the wolves are a representation of

the wild part of the subconscious mind, our instincts and the part of ourselves we cannot control. The dog is the domesticated part of the mind that might help us to deal with life. The lion is taken from the tarot as symbol of strength. The wild horses and flying birds are worked as symbols of freedom (Image 22).



Image 22 – Flying birds and wild horses.

In each drawing I deal with rhythms. We can find them easily in nature, life and creative processes. The combination of rhythms create the final image of what we are doing. When I decide to use a restricted pallet of colors – only blue and white – the rhythm is reductive, a rhythm we can find totally in minimalism as example. On the other hand, I use the expansive rhythm, its opposite, in the composition of my drawings/paintings, a rhythm we can find in nature pretty easily with the spiral, the explosion of stars and the start of the spring. Doing so, I find a balance between expansion and reduction that helps me to express what I am doing in a harmonious way. The other two rhythms are chaos and order. In my images I combine them in the big picture: the order of the spiral and its divisions and the chaos of randomness of the images. Each person has naturally one or more rhythms stronger than the others. My nature have always been more expansive and chaotic than reductive and ordinated, and the strategies of the

reductive pallet and the divisions for the images is only a way I found to balance them. Everything is a question of balance. It is in the process that we find how to do it when we are experimenting without thinking too much on it. That was what I did on my sketchbook during these years, and those are the inputs I use in the last months to create the installation, or more accurately, the assemblage I am presenting with this text. One thing leads to the other. Dealing with life led to drawing and glass. The drawings led to the paintings and then, the paintings led to the ceramic tiles than somehow influenced the choose of pallet in the glass working. The idea of assemblage the elements in the space led to the sculptures. Even though, I highlight that the process is not linear, it just have breaking points. Those breaking points lead to growth in specific areas in which the breaking points were discovered. Everything works as a rhizome.

#### **4.3. Glass as a metaphor**

In my rhizomatic process glass passes from a material to a metaphor, even started as so. When I decided to use glass in my artistic practice I did it because of its fragility. I found the rest of a car crash in the ground, including the crashed safety glass and in a process of bending, I used the tiger as a symbol of strength in a dialogue of opposites fragility-strength (Image 23). Glass is a fragile material we recognize by being in most cases transparent. When I decided to go further on glass in a master degree it was because the material seemed to me like frozen water in the space-time and I wanted to know how to work it in a deepest level. As water is the symbol for emotions, universal memory and the subconscious, it was the perfect material to talk about the possibility of healing wounds in those fields. The brokenness and it possibility of repair or uses was something that captivates me. Even though, in order to find a deeper metaphor through glass and our inner world what we must do is to define what is glass, what is it behavior and how it can be related with our own psychological processes as human beings. Glass is a non-crystalline amorphous solid that, at a naked eye, have the appearance of a crystal. It structure is not perfect as the crystal's; it is casual, maybe chaotic and messy as we are in our inner worlds. Glass can be seen metaphorically and must be in my rhizomatic process as an important node. It is the material of cups. The material of the vessel. Through glasses we can see new worlds. The microscope, the telescope, etc shows us other realities. Art can be seen metaphorically as a glass. it shows us a new world. Even not being fully present as a material it is incorporated in as a metaphor useful for my creative process and important to highlight.



Image 23 – Valeria Montaña “Cuidado! Frágil! Tigre.” 2013. 120 x 120 cm. Tiger made in painting and safety glass.

#### 4.4. FISHING IN THE INNER SEA

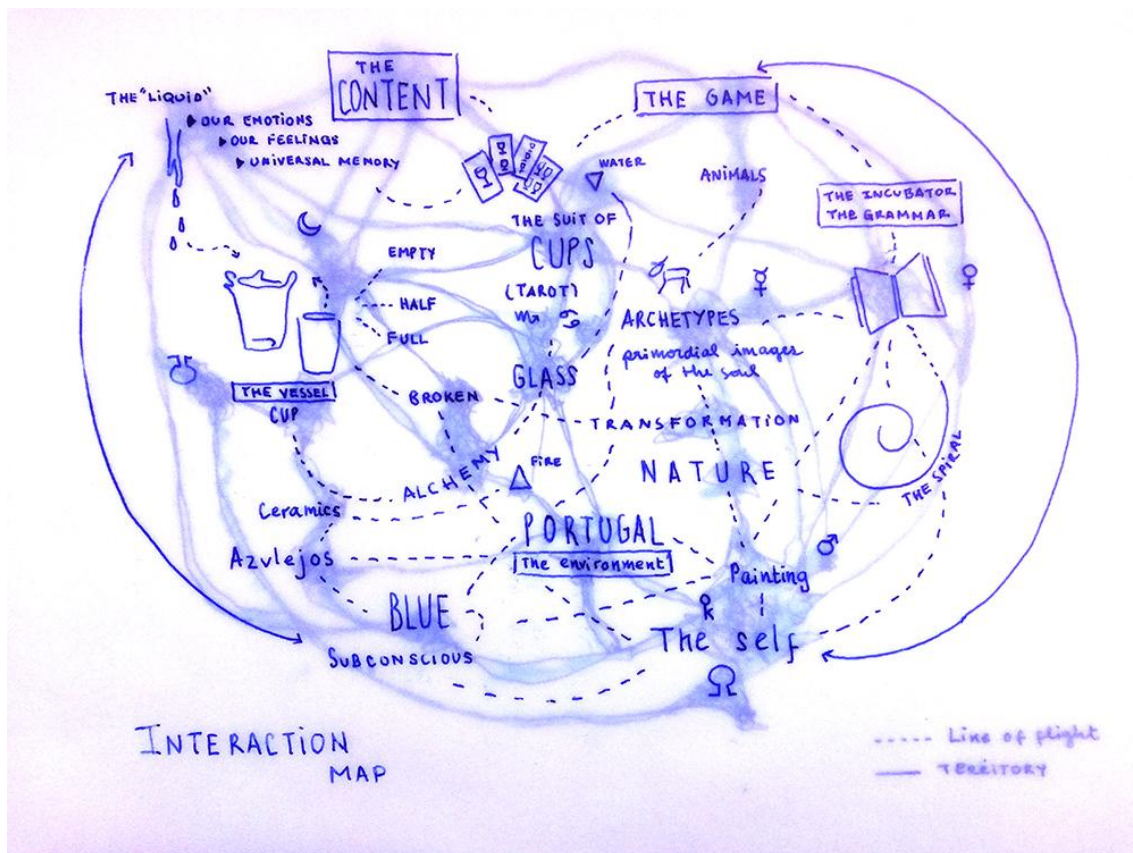


Image 24 – Interaction map of “Fishing in the inner sea”

“Fishing in the inner sea” investigation (image 24) used a rhizomatic proposal in the exploration territory demarcated by the self – the game – the content. Inside of this territory, lines of flight are done between nodes of significance as the vessel, the liquid as symbol of emotions, feelings and universal memory, the suit of cups of the tarot as a symbolic delimiting of action, archetypes, the grammar that was taken from the sketchbook – the incubator -; the environment –Portugal-, the painting as the most significant inclination of expression of the self, the rhythms found in nature which allows transformation, alchemy, glass and ceramics. Alchemical and astrological signs are used to point out processes and energies: fire  $\triangle$  and water  $\nabla$  near to the materials (glass and ceramics) crossing the idea of alchemy; the Moon  $\text{☾}$  in correspondence with the emotional world, subconscious and universal memory; Mercury  $\text{☿}$  in correspondence with communication and consciousness;  $\text{♀}$  Venus for incubation,  $\text{♂}$  Mars, the god of war, for strength. Chiron (  $\text{♄}$  ), the deep wound. As this creative process is based on the self and the possibility of transform the emotional wounds into art,

Chiron takes a significant relevance. Chiron was a gifted centaur with the power of healing, son of the god Cronus (time) in Greek mythology. His healing powers just didn't work on his own wounds. Astrologers refer to him as the "wounded healer". It is from the wound that the creative process develops: it connects with the environment and their characteristics that connect, in my case, with the blue color of the azulejos (ceramics) that are also related to the blue of the subconscious mind. The idea of the vessel and the content is also very important: the movement of emptying the vessel and filling it with the discoverers of the self in the field of the emotional world and memory. Every node in the map can be (and must be) interconnected with other nodes, creating lines of flight that allows creativity to flow and art making come from inside out. This map can be used for other artist-investigators for future practice-led research. Nodes can be altered to match the necessities of the art investigator: as an example I can name "painting", that in my case, is the medium of expression the self is more inclined to use. Other people can find casting or glass blowing, even clay modeling the medium of expression the self is more inclined to. Other example is "the game" that in my case is the tarot. Other people can find other kind of game more appealing like the I-Ching or even more exoteric ones like poker, dominos, or chess. The archetypal world is also wide and diverse. The incubator can be a sketchbook as well as a notebook or anything else in which we naturally empty ourselves without thinking too much; the important thing is we can find there a grammar to work on later. The rhythms will be always the four formative rhythms I remitted in the chapter of rhythms, and nature will always give us inspirational material. The idea of "brokenness" remits us to the nature of glass and ceramics and is an important node to name here. It connects with the self, passing by the environment in one line of flight, and passing through transformation to construct a grammar in the other line of flight.

To sum up, the map shows a territory of exploration demarked by the content, the game and the self. Inside this territory, nodes of significance are connected by lines of flight allowing connections that fire creativity to flow into the concretion of the artistic practice into significant art.

#### **4.5 Fishing in the inner sea, the exhibition**

The exhibition of "Fishing in the inner sea" is rhizomatic, nomadic proposal. It is thought to inhabit the space in which is immersed, dialoguing with the architecture, the cracks, the marks, etc; (Image 25) becoming in this way a site specific installation. During three days, it inhabited the Chapel, a space inside the Belas Artes,

Universidade de Lisboa. During those three days, an important action took place: the objects were moved, the lines of flight pointed by tiny alterations in the space and, after the exhibition, the rhizome was broken to re-growth in the future from selected objects. The proposal goes beyond the objects. The exhibition is not static at all. It grows. It changes. It develops itself from the bricks, from the ideas, from the necessity of expanding itself, like life. The dialogistic attitude can be seen not only with the materials and surfaces but also with the space and the senses. The lines of flight were subtly pointed by the objects, like a glass in the ground (Image 27), a ceramic tile, a sculpture, etc.



Image 25 – A piece of ceramic dialoguing with the ground, in the second day, after a change in the rhizome. This piece was initially in the top.





Image 26 – The glass indicates a line of flight, as well the position of the ceramic frog.

## CONCLUSIONS

Creativity works in the brain like a collage: we remix the inputs of our experiences, images, and the already-made of our field, adding novelty to it. There are three main methods to address it: bending, breaking and blending (Eagleman, 2017) and five steps: preparation, incubation, evaluation, materialization and elaboration (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). It totally matches my own processes. A person comes up with a new project using this kind of procedures. I add here the idea of the rhizome in Deleuze and Guattari terms as a valuable metaphor for the creative process. In a rhizome, all nodes can be connected with each other's. This horizontal network organization is useful in a creative process because of the freedom it provides. The lines of thought when connecting nodes allows new ideas to emerge in a blending process, carrying with them new associations though entities and events.

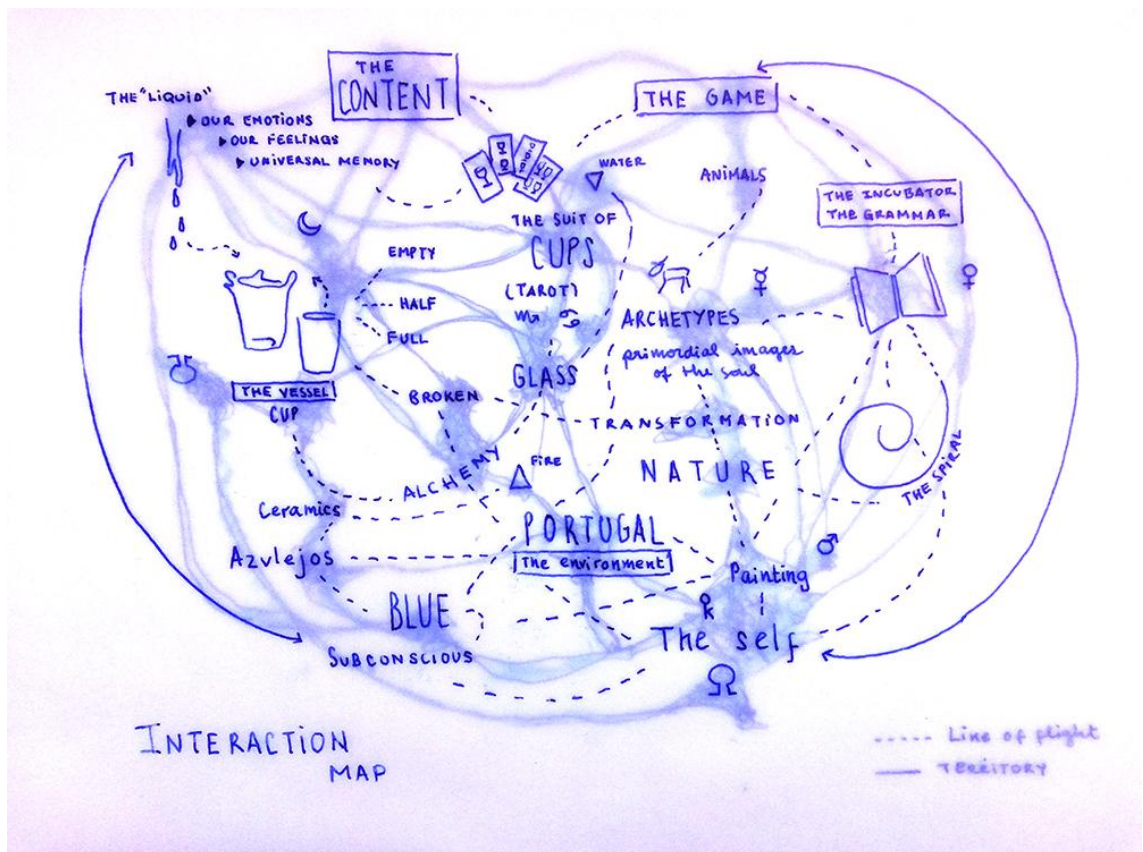
As research in art can be something valid in the Academia, I can affirm that with my reflexive practice I have discovered a way to address the inner world using inputs of the outer world and mixing them in an experimentation phase in which there are not judgment of what is being done. In other words, the creative process in my case, far from being linear, behaves like a rhizome and feed itself of a grammar taken from a phase of experimentation in which one doesn't think much about what is being done, just do it. Even though, as a rhizome, everything is being breeding from everything else, in a complex tissue of significance. One thing lead to the other, and as a artist researcher one just need to be attentive to what the creative process is asking for in each phase. Everything falls into place when the time comes. Reflexive practice became suitable to verbalize what cannot be said while I develop my work through art practice. To live in the tension between the familiar and the new signifies to be creative, and some times is hard to live with the uncertainty of this tension. If there is confidence that everything will make sense in the proper time, the creative process can flow more easily and be more fun. Rhythm plays an important role in the execution of a work of art and balancing rhythms is a good strategy to come up with something interesting for the field. When the artwork is assembled, it reveals symbolic knowledge even for the artist that has created it. To read our own creation is a pleasure and can open new discoveries in symbolic matters while offering a contribution as a way of making to the artistic research community. Those can be used in the future (as one thing leads to the other) or just reveal something new about the subject we were working on. The novelty I present with my work is the passage from the installation to the assemblage in Deleuzian terms: the exhibition becomes a map of a rhizome and

embraces the possibility of changing, expanding and re-signifying itself. The rhizome can be broken from separating pieces and growing again from each point, in that sense, I can carry with me the paintings and start over them the rhizome in my own country once finished the experience here in Portugal. For academic peers, this dissertation opens the possibility whether to quote, experiment, appropriate or reinterpret my rhizomatic performativity regarding creativity in glass and ceramic artistic practice. The symbolic correspondences in painting, glass and ceramics with emotions, memory and the unconscious process of healing this kind of wounds come from the metaphors we can find though the idea of brokenness and repairing these materials allow with its own fragility. The dialogue with the tradition is inevitable because of the mediums themselves and the uses or ideas we already recognize on them. The way to add novelty is what brings them to the contemporary art field. Contemporary artists that have worked this before or well add a personal language to the already existent or well use the tradition to deliver a strong message correspondent to the actual time.

As an outcome of this rhizomatic proposal for creative process in glass and ceramic practice-led research is offered for future studio practice-based research the map found in attachment 1.

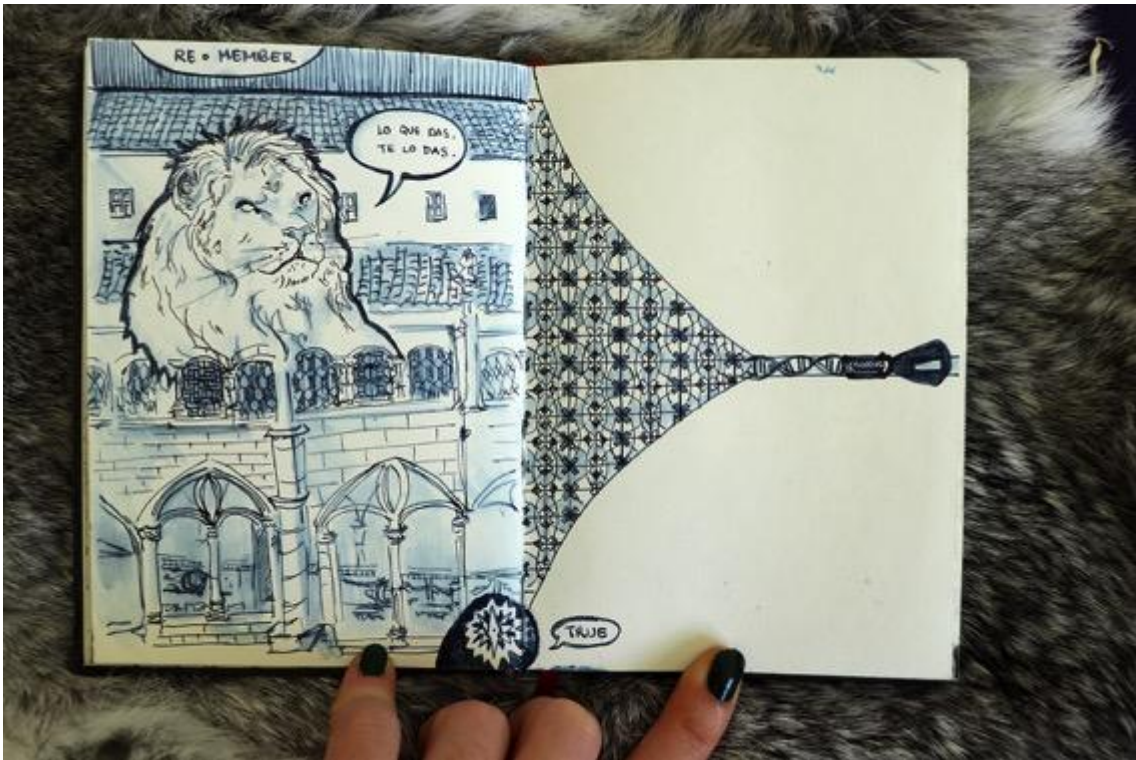
## **ATTACHMENTS**

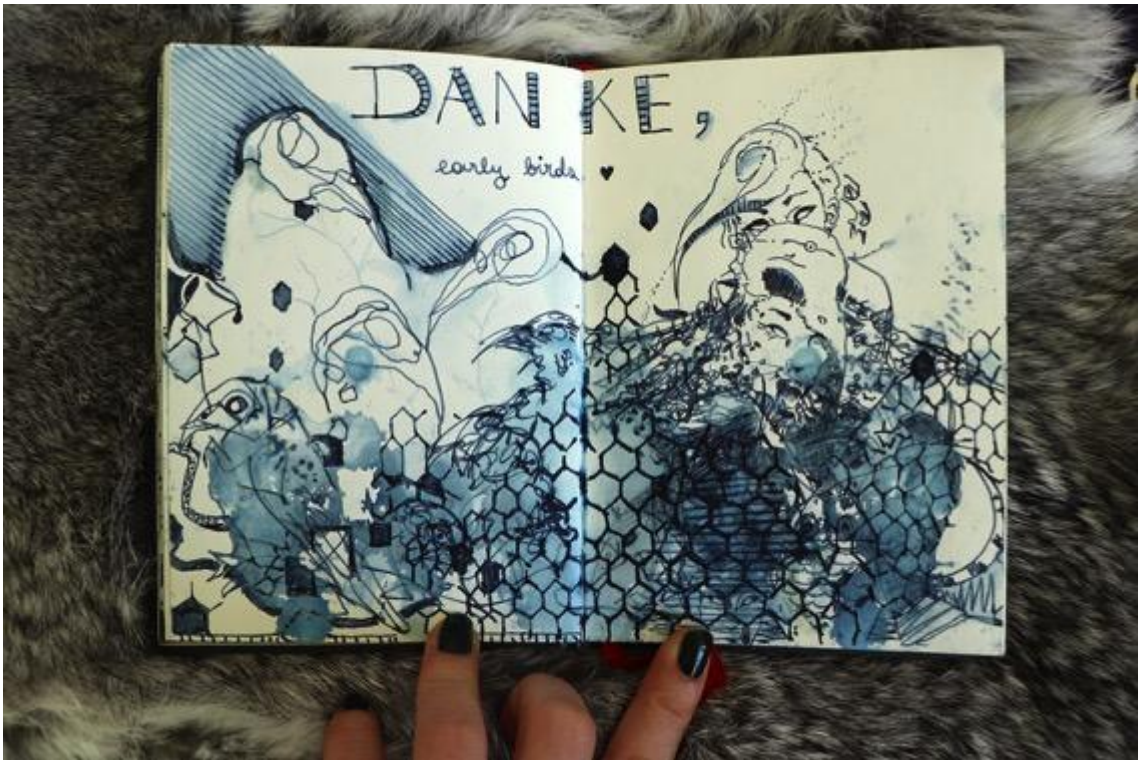
## 1. INTERACTION MAP OF "FISHING IN THE INNER SEA"

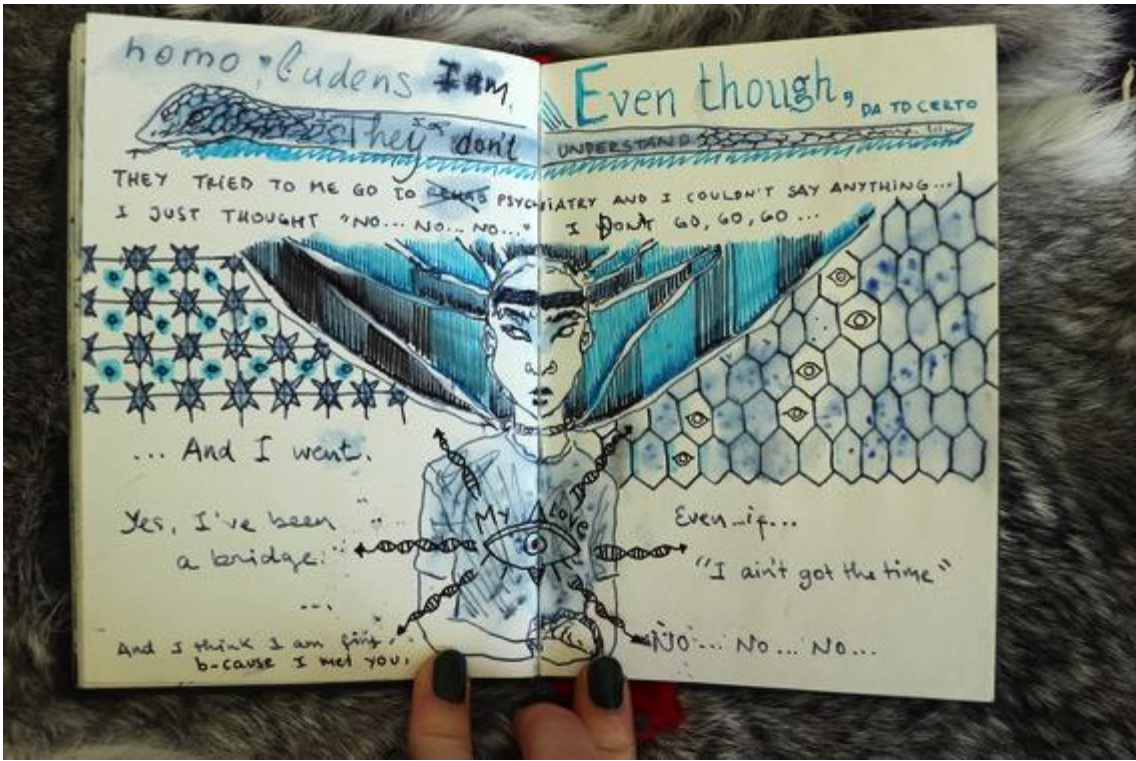


## 2. SKETCHBOOK (selected)









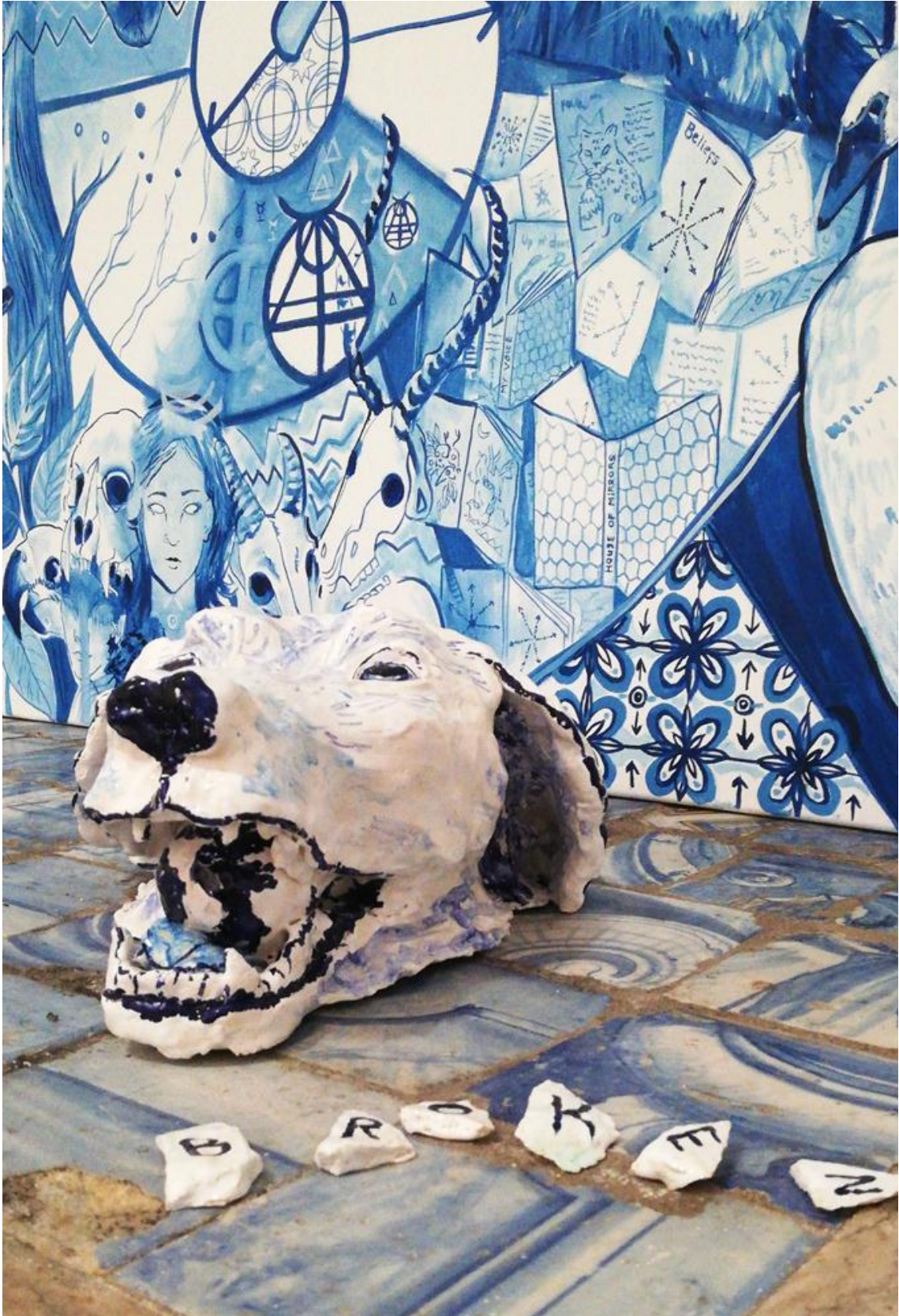




### 3. FISHING IN THE INNER SEA (Chapel, Belas Artes)















## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ADKINS, B. (2015). Rhizome. In Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (pp. 22-33). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

AMABILE, T. M. (1983). *The Social Psychology of Creativity*. New York: Springer-Verlag.

BORGDOFF, H. Artistic research within the fields of science, [https://konst.gu.se/digitalAssets/1322/1322679\\_artistic-research-within-the-fields-of-science.pdf](https://konst.gu.se/digitalAssets/1322/1322679_artistic-research-within-the-fields-of-science.pdf)

BAERS, M. (2011) Inside the Box: Notes From Within the European Artistic Research Debate <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/26/67944/inside-the-box-notes-from-within-the-european-artistic-research-debate/>

CADUFF, C. (s/d) Artistic research methods Developments of a discourse <https://corinacaduff.ch/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Artistic-Research1.pdf>

CSIKSZENTMIHALYI, Mihaly. "Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention" (2009). New York: HarperCollins.

DELEUZE, G. GUATARI, F. (1987), "A Thousand Plateaus" Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press tr. Brian Massumi

EAGLEMAN D., BRANDT A. (2017). The Runaway Species, How Human Creativity Remakes the World. Canongate Books Ltd.

FARYLING, C. (1994) research papers v.1, n1, [http://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/384/3/frayling\\_research\\_in\\_art\\_and\\_design\\_1993.pdf](http://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/384/3/frayling_research_in_art_and_design_1993.pdf)

FOSTER, C. P. (1933). Oracle of the tarot.

JUNG, C.G. (1964). Man and his symbols. Doubleday, New York: Anchor Books

E. LUMSDAINE, M. LUMSDAINE (1995) Creative Problem Solving: Thinking Skills for a Changing World. Singapore : McGraw-Hill

SULLIVAN G. (2005) Art practice as research: inquiry in the visual arts. London : Sage Publications

SUNDGREN, M. (2003) International Journal of Internet and Enterprise Management. Research Gate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/220438728>

WALLAS, G. (1926) The art of thought. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company



## **IMAGES**

<https://mymodernmet.com/lei-xue-drinking-tea/>

<http://katharinemorling.co.uk/>

<https://mymodernmet.com/katharine-morling-ceramic-sculptures/>

<http://www.adriavarejao.net>

<http://arteseanp.blogspot.com/2010/03/christine-borland.html>

<https://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/kiki-smith>

<https://hyperallergic.com/191723/worlds-largest-space-for-contemporary-glass-art-lets-in-the-light/>